

IO26975  
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**Spurling, Norman**

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**From:** Miller, Robert  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 17, 2014 10:54 AM  
**To:** Spurling, Norman  
**Cc:** Mastrotta, Nicholas  
**Subject:** Gray Wolf Poisoning

Hi Norman,

Below is a link to a US F&WS news release concerning the 2009 poisoning of a gray wolf with sodium cyanide.

<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/pressrel/11-03.htm>

Bob

## Office of External Affairs

### Mountain-Prairie Region

Update to IO22559  
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#### NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Mountain-Prairie Region  
134 Union Boulevard  
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

11 " IO22656

Eagle Co., CO

4/6/2009

January 11, 2011

Contact: Steve Oberholtzer, 303-236-7893  
Steve\_Oberholtzer@fws.gov

### 2009 Death of Gray Wolf in Colorado Tied to Banned Poison

Law enforcement officials from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today that the Yellowstone-area gray wolf found dead in Colorado in 2009 was illegally poisoned.

The radio-collared female gray wolf was found near Rio Blanco County Road 60 on April 6, 2009 after researchers received the mortality signal from her GPS tracking collar. Toxicology tests performed at the National Fish and Wildlife Forensic Laboratory showed the two-year-old gray wolf, which had been captured and collared as part of a Montana research project, died from ingesting a banned poison known as Compound 1080. It is suspected the wolf ingested the poison near the site where she was found.

With the investigation more than a year and a half old, investigators are now asking the public for information about the case. "When used improperly, Compound 1080 is an indiscriminate killer of wildlife, and we are asking the public to help us identify who used this banned poison in Colorado," said Steve Oberholtzer, Special Agent in Charge for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Mountain-Prairie Region.

Compound 1080 was commonly used in the United States prior to 1972 for controlling rodents and livestock predators such as coyotes and foxes. It was banned in the U.S. in 1972, but the rule was modified in 1985 to allow the poison to be used in some states for predator control in a highly regulated fashion. Compound 1080 is currently illegal to use in the state of Colorado.

Young gray wolves frequently disperse from their native pack, often traveling long distances in search of a mate and the opportunity to establish a new breeding pack. This wolf dispersed from her pack in Montana in September 2008. An analysis of signals received from her GPS collar shows she had traveled an estimated 3,000 miles in the seven months prior to her death. It is not unusual for lone

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wolves to travel such long distances in search of mates. Because of this wolf's constant wide-ranging movements, biologists believe she did not encounter other wolves during her journey.

Law enforcement officers with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Colorado Division of Wildlife said they could not find any evidence of traps, poison baits or other potential causes of death in the vicinity of her carcass. Searches around GPS locations where the wolf had been prior to her death also failed to identify a definitive location of the poisoning site. Numerous carcasses were found, including multiple old sheep carcasses and one coyote carcass; however, no obvious illegal poisoned bait stations were discovered.

Gray wolves in Colorado are federally protected by the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The ESA prohibits anyone from harassing, harming, pursuing, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, collecting, or attempting to do any of these things, to any endangered species unless specifically authorized by federal regulations to do so. While some wolves have been illegally killed by poisoning, it is a rare occurrence compared to illegal shooting. Penalties for illegally killing an endangered species can range up to a \$100,000 fine and a year of incarceration.

Anyone with information regarding this wolf's death that would be useful to investigators is urged to contact either the Colorado Division of Wildlife's Operation Game Thief hotline number at (877) 265-6648 and/or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at (720) 981-2777.

(Note: Please contact Leith Edgar at 303-236-7905 for a copy of the map depicts the locations of this female wolf as recorded by GPS signals.)

**Email Us:** [MountainPrairie@fws.gov](mailto:MountainPrairie@fws.gov)  
[Mountain-Prairie Region Press Releases](#)